

Exercise Evaluation Report

Pegasus

Location: North New Brighton area

Date: 4 November 2018

Report version: Incident Management – Version 1

Evaluator(s): *Rachel McKenzie, Coastguard Southern Region*

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Executive Summary

Police instructions require each District to conduct at least one Marine SAREX annually; this event was the annual Marine SAREX for the Canterbury District and served as the districts major marine training exercise for the year.

The intent of the exercise was to build experience and knowledge in IMT capability with multi-agency input, to use SARNET during the exercise for log keeping, briefing and communication and to give on water teams the opportunity to search for and treat patients for an extended period.

The SAREX was set up based on a search for a missing vessel with 3 people on board. Three targets were deployed, two floating and one on the beach near the New Brighton area.

The SAREX ICP was run out of the Coastguard North Canterbury base.

The call out procedure replicated typical operational deployment, except that due to time constraints on water assets were waiting at their respective Coastguard units for tasking.

Two of the targets were located and recovered by on water assets, the third target was picked up by a land based team.

A hot debrief was held at Coastguard North Canterbury which all exercise participants were invited to and encouraged to contribute.

1. Recommendations

Feedback from the exercise evaluator and participants was captured during the hot debrief and these recommendations were prepared taking this feedback into consideration.

1. Develop a simple checklist to follow when developing a Search Area Determination (SAD) so that steps aren't missed and the SAD is completed in a timely manner.
2. Arrange further training in the use of SARNET for all Coastguard units so that the people tasked with using it know how to set it up and understand how, when and what decisions to log.
3. Ensure that there are plenty of whiteboards set up to display relevant information in any location selected as an ICP.
4. Ensure that the exercise set up is strictly adhered to and not changed on the whim of crew setting up the search area. This will eliminate frustration amongst participants, ensure that all participants are able to attend the hot debrief and ensure all objectives are exercised to some degree.

2. Introduction

This event was the annual Marine SAREX for the Canterbury District and served as the major training event for the year for marine assets.

The exercise was designed to build some depth within the Canterbury IMT capability while giving water based teams an opportunity to practise their skills.

The SAREX was based on the scenario of a missing vessel with 3 people on board.

The Exercise Controller was Sergeant Phil Simmonds.

The IMT for the exercise was based out of the Coastguard North Canterbury base.

3. Background

3.1 Background to the Exercise

Extended searches are not common in the Canterbury region so this exercise was used to ensure search skills are maintained.

This type of scenario was used for this exercise to build some depth in the IMT capability, and to give water based teams an opportunity to refresh their skills in the context of an actual incident.

3.2 Dates, location, organising agency(s), key people

DATE: 4 November 2018

LOCATIONS: ICP – Coastguard North Canterbury base
Search area – North New Brighton area

ORGANISING AGENCIES: NZ Police, Coastguard

KEY PEOPLE: Sergeant Phil SIMMONDS, Patrick LEWIS, Blair QUANE, John THOMPSON

3.3 Participating organisations

Canterbury Police SAR squad, Coastguard Canterbury, Coastguard North Canterbury, Sumner Lifeboat, Coastguard South Canterbury.

3.4 Exercise aim

To promote and enhance Search and Rescue Incident Management capability and refine water based skills in a SAR exercise set in the context of an actual incident.

3.5 Exercise objectives

1. To identify best practice with communication systems between search assets and the IMT
2. To build depth and capability among Coastguard volunteers working within an IMT
3. To provide opportunity for on water assets to practice working together and providing sound information back to the IMT
4. To test the knowledge of on water teams to assess and treat patients for an extended period

3.6 Exercise Scenario

The exercise scenario was based on the search response for an overdue vessel with three people on board.

The full scenario can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Evaluation Methodology

4.1 The agreed outcomes of the evaluation activity

The exercise planners and evaluator agreed on what was to be observed during the exercise. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are included in the appendix.

4.2 Evaluation scope

The following activities fell within the scope of the SAR exercise:

- Establishing an Incident Management Team using Coastguard personnel.
- Commencing a SAR operation using the available resources.
- Running SARNET to task assets and maintain a running log.
- Running a hot debrief at the conclusion of the exercise.

4.3 Aspects of the exercise observed, what was not observed

The evaluator was able to observe the IMT aspects of the exercise, Exercise Control as well as observe and participate in the hot debrief.

All on water activities were not observed by the evaluator.

4.4 The process followed in preparing and submitting the report

The evaluator assisted in initial planning and preparing the exercise objectives.

Feedback was taken from the exercise participants during the hot debrief, this was from both the IMT and field teams; this was used to help build the evaluation report.

5. Findings

The SAR exercise was based on a simple scenario, to search for a missing vessel with 3 people on board.

Exercise Control had a good plan and the search area was set up prior to the exercise starting.

The initial IAP and taskings were developed quickly which helped the IMT to keep on track (A copy of the IAP is shown in the appendix).

In a change from previous exercises the Coastguard personnel took the lead CIMS functions (Operations, Planning, Intelligence, Logistics) and were mentored by members of the Police SAR squad and other experienced Coastguard members. Overall this worked well and gave the Coastguard personnel some valuable practical experience.

While initial taskings were developed and on water assets tasked quickly, completing a Search Area Determination (SAD) took some time. A checklist going through the steps of developing a SAD would be a useful resource.

SARNET was used across the IMT and to send taskings to the vessels on the water. It is a useful system for tasking and log keeping, but urgent information needs to be followed up with a call via VHF radio to ensure the message has been received. SARNET can also be used to keep a more thorough log of decision making.

The Coastguard North Canterbury base worked quite well as an ICP, there was enough room to spread the functional areas out and the radio was isolated in a different room so was not a distraction. More whiteboards and wall space set up to display information would be an improvement while the IAP whiteboard is excellent.

The on water search was well conducted by the assets deployed in the field, they conducted the tasks given in a structured and timely manner.

The exercise was marred by the realisation towards the end of the scheduled time that the crew that had placed the 'debris field' out prior to the exercise starting had taken it upon themselves to change the locations without informing Exercise Control and not tie 'casualty' dummies together as instructed. This meant that the information given via inject was not leading the exercise to the natural conclusion of the on water assets locating and providing first aid to the casualties. It also meant that the objective of testing the knowledge of on water teams to assess and treat patients for an extended period could not be completed at all.

- Exercise Control did well to modify the information they gave to the IMT to help with locating the 'casualties' after the location was changed.
- Fortunately one of the casualty dummies had a tracking device attached so was able to be located quickly, although the second one took some time to locate.
- Unfortunately on water assets from Coastguard Canterbury and Sumner Lifeboat returned to their respective bases rather than attending the hot debrief due to the extra time taken to locate the targets.

6. Conclusions

This SAR exercise was an ideal opportunity for the Police SAR squad and the local Coastguard units to work together in a functioning IMT operation.

Having the Coastguard members running the CIMS functions over the course of the SAREX was an excellent way to build depth and capability for these roles and also gave the Police members a chance to mentor and learn themselves.

The use of SARNET is getting better every time a SAREX is run with issues being ironed out quickly. Although it is not always easy to use on board the on water assets it does work well to relay complex information such as positions and times.

All the Coastguard units worked closely together remaining focussed on the common goal of completing the search to a high degree and locating the missing subject/s. Unfortunately the objective of assessing and treating patients couldn't be met due to the changing of the search area and information by the team setting up the exercise. This really showed why it is important for Exercise Control to know all relevant information so that time and effort is not wasted during the exercise.

Overall the SAREX was an excellent learning experience for all involved. It was well planned, well run, and was a worthwhile exercise for all. Individuals as well as groups would have taken new found knowledge and experience back to their respective units.

7. Appendix

Appendix 1 - Exercise Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objectives

1. To identify best practice with communication systems between search assets and the IMT
2. To build depth and capability among Coastguard volunteers working within an IMT
3. To provide opportunity for on water assets to practice working together and providing sound information back to the IMT
4. To test the knowledge of on water teams to assess and treat patients for an extended period

KPIs

1. SARNET is used efficiently where possible to pass information between search assets and IMT
2. SARNET used efficiently within the IMT to pass messages and record all decisions and actions
3. Correct radio procedure used where SARNET not available
4. Initial action taskings are well thought out using initial information
5. Search assets are deployed correctly using the initial taskings
6. An Incident Action Plan (IAP) is prepared by the correct IMT personnel as soon as possible and prominently displayed
7. An accurate Search Area Determination (SAD) is completed as soon as possible by trained personnel
8. Where appropriate and time allows a SAD is requested from RCCNZ
9. The debris field is accurately documented by the on water assets as objects are located
10. The type and location of debris is relayed to the IMT in a timely and accurate fashion using the best means of communication available
11. The usefulness of deploying a drone to aid in the search is determined via the hot debrief
12. Determine the method for documenting sightings via the drone and how these are communicated accurately to the IMT
13. Patient assessment and treatment while on board a vessel is carried out to current standards
14. All communications regarding patient status is communicated to the IMT

Appendix 2 – Exercise Scenario

Scenario Setup

The vessel, a 5m aluminium runabout called Backstreet Boys, left Lyttelton @ 0600hrs to go king fishing along the inshore waters between Godley Head and New Brighton Pier. The vessel had 3 persons on board two wearing lifejackets and one not. Travelling at speed at 0720 the vessel hit a solid object in the water and two of the occupants were thrown out of the vessel. The skipper remained in the vessel but was knocked unconscious. The vessel was approximately 1-2km offshore out the front of South Brighton spit.

The vessel was holed but the motor was still going and continued inshore until it filled with water and sunk. The skipper awoke in the water with the boat sinking. He was offshore half way between Brighton Spit and Brighton Pier. He has a severely broken forearm and deep cuts to his head. He manages to swim to shore along the coast around South Brighton surf club but is dazed and confused and just sitting up by the sand dunes.

Debris from the vessel includes a tote tank, a chilli bin, and a lifejacket (these will be distributed between the point two victims went overboard and where the vessel sank)

As a result of not wearing a lifejacket and working hard to stay afloat one of the victims in the water is suffering severe hypothermia. When he is retrieved he goes into cardiac arrest and requires immediate and ongoing CPR/defib treatment. He is to be transported at the safest speed to a determined rendezvous point, and transported to waiting land based ambulance crew.

Scenario Information

- At 0900 the Police receive a 111 call from Kevin Richardson who said that he had received a message on his cell phone from his mate, Brian Littrell. The message was garbled and hard to hear but said that his mate was out fishing and said had hit something, was in the water and could not see the boat. He sounded really panicky and in trouble. The call was garbled and hard to hear.
- The message was left on his cell phone at 7:30am but he was asleep and missed it. He checked his phone at 0900hrs an
- The night before he had been out having a beer with Brian who had told him he was heading out from Lyttelton early in the morning to chase Kingfish. They intended to start fishing from Lyttelton heads and work their way to New Brighton pier.
- The boat was owned by another mate Howie Dorough.

Other Available information (if asked or sought)

- The vehicle and trailer of Howie Dorough is parked at Lyttelton ramp
- There was no trip report logged with Coastguard
- Kevin Richardson (informant) has saved the recording of the message on his voicemail from Brian Littrell. The message is "F@#k Kev, where are you, we smashed into something as [garbled]... Jeezus mate I'm in the water, can't see the f\$@ken boat anywhere I...[garbled].... can't see Howie or AJ...[garbled]...get help I'm miles from shore...[phone call cuts out]
- The vessel is a Fyran 5m aluminium runabout, it has a Johnson 40hp on the back, red Bimini, it is called "Backstreet Boys". Kevin Richardson has a photo of it on his phone.

- The vessel has lifejackets but they do not always wear them. They have a VHF radio, no EPIRB and carry flares in one of those yellow containers. The vessel has tote tanks.
- There are five guys who go out fishing regularly on the boat. It is unclear who is actually on the boat but it is only ever one of the group below.
 - Kevin Richardson (informant)
 - AJ Mclean
 - Howie Dorough
 - Nick Carter
 - Brian Littrell (missing & made phone call)
- The cell phones of the following guys is going straight to voice mail.
 - AJ Mclean
 - Howie Dorough
 - Nick Carter
 - Brian Littrell
- They normally head out from Lyttelton and fish the strip between Lyttelton Heads and New Brighton pier. They generally fish the kelp patches where the kingies sit under.



Appendix 3 – Exercise IAP

INCIDENT ACTION PLAN				NZSAR New Zealand Search and Rescue	
Situation: <i>Three persons out fishing, struck object, possibly now all in water</i>			Phase/Operational Period: <i>0920 — 1230</i>		
Mission/Goal: <i>Locate Brian + companions (2)</i>					
Date/Time Missing: <i>4.11.2018 0730</i>	OBJECTIVES FOR OPERATIONAL PERIOD (Keep it SMART)		STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE IT		
Missing Person and NOK: BRIAN LITRELL	1 <i>Est. IMT</i>				
	2 <i>Shoreline search</i>		<i>Police vehicle (land) Coastguard vessel (inshore)</i>		
	3 <i>Search NB Pier → Lyttelton Harbour</i>		<i>Coastguard vessels</i>		
	4 <i>Further intel.</i>		<i>Contact informant, family, background check</i>		
LKP: <i>Lytt. Harbour → NB Pier</i>	5 <i>Formulate S.A.D.</i>		<i>RCCNZ (1) and Coastguard (2)</i>		
Survivability: • <i>Water temp =</i> • <i>Contact Dr. Dick Price</i> • <i>Weather forecast</i> • <i>Equipment</i>	Weather: <i>SW 25 → NW 20 SWELL: NE 2m SW 1m</i>		Safety/Hazards: - <i>water</i> - <i>current/tide/wind</i> - <i>rocks/reefs</i> - <i>environment</i> - <i>other vessels on water</i>		Critical Elements/To do: - <i>S.A.D</i> - <i>Shoreline search</i> - <i>water search intended route</i> - <i>gather intel / background info</i>
	Rescue Plan: • <i>Check Hosp. on standby</i> • <i>Coastguard vessels searching on water</i> • <i>Shoreline search</i>			Comms Plan: • <i>Maine channels 63 and 6</i>	
COMMAND STRUCTURE					
RCCNZ CAT II INCIDENT:					
Incident Controller BRENT MENZIES					
Intell ANDREW	Planning PADDY	Operations TIM	Logistics		
Media: • <i>Marine broadcast</i> • <i>Police media release</i>					